

MA SUSTAINABLE DESIGN ROUNDTABLE WORKING GROUP MEETING NOTES

Group: **Standards, Codes and Regulations**

Date: January 26, 2005

Location: Gensler Associates, 133 Federal St., Boston, MA

Attendees: Ken Fisher (Gensler, co chair), Kim Cullinane (MTC, co chair), Lawrence Masland (DOER), Joe Buckley (DHCD), Aisling Eglington (MEPA), Jennifer Somers(EHEinc), Vernon Woodworth (Sullivan Code Group), Marie Zack Nolan (EOEA, staff)

Group welcomed new member Vernon Woodworth, Code Consultant, Sullivan Code Group

Issues can be divided into 3 areas as per 1-13-05 WG meeting notes:

- standards, codes and federal requirements
- state laws and regulations
- municipal ordinances and approvals, local zoning laws, local inspections

Scoping/ clarification of the barrier issues:

- Difficult for code writers to respond to new technologies-overlap with education working group
- No incentive to make integrated design part of approach or understanding
- Some regulations may not be barriers but enhance sustainability and are progressive (MEPA)
- How do you leverage progressive standards/regulations into opportunities for sustainability
- MA is more subject to Architectural Access Board than ADA requirements
- Increasingly stringent code restrictions discourage urban renovation and promote new site development instead.
- MA adopted Chapter 13, MA Building Code in middle of Edition 6. Seventh edition is due out mid year. BBRS will hold public hearings for comments, one in May.
- Building codes dictate what architects/engineers can design
- Local zoning promotes sprawl. Chapter 40B allows developer to bypass local zoning requirements in town that has less than 10% affordable housing.
- LCA in Chapter 13. Differences between LEED and code?
- Studying other states could be relevant to improving MA codes and regulations. Other parts of country adopt the International Building Code. This makes it easier for national developers to site buildings.

Enforcement issues:

- Codes not well enforced by building officials. Owner must make code adherence a priority, easier in public sector where there are fewer economic considerations.
- Education is key. BBRS does not have resources to provide training, but training opportunities on building codes exist.
- Local building officials interpret codes differently. BBRS has appeals process. Local inspectors enforce their local codes, may be conflicts between fire, building, other areas.
- Priority issue - life and structure safety comes first, then sustainable design.

Relevant Codes:

Plumbing – CMR 248

Elevator – CMR 524

Building – 780 CMR

Energy – Chapter 13 of Building Code

Building Code Amendments

Building Code Appendices

Site design – local zoning

Waterfront development – Chapter 91

- What parts of these codes provide barriers vs. opportunities to Sustainable Design?
- Barrier when codes are too complicated, restrictive, e.g. acceptance of underflow air systems

Tasks to be done for Next Meeting:

- Kim Cullinane and Ken Fisher will draft survey questions on barriers for discussion at the next working group meeting. Survey will ask stakeholders what the barriers/issues/problems are when complying with codes and standards while designing sustainably, from their perspective.
- Model process – Ft Devens group of businesses, Mass Development, Devens Enterprise Commission group. Goal is to provide environmental leadership. Aisling Eglington will get feedback from this group.
- Aisling Eglington will talk to DEP officials to get a sense of environmental regulatory barriers, possibly wastewater reuse and hazardous waste regulations (byproduct exchange).
- Vernon Woodworth will contact the city of Chicago about their research on building codes to attempt to resolve conflicts between code restrictions and LEED credits or other green building concepts.
- Marie Zack Nolan will begin to look into other states' approaches to green building standards and codes.
- Jennifer Somers will talk to The Green Roundtable about resources it has on standards, codes and regulations.
- Vernon Woodworth will search AIA database.

Next Meeting:

February 9, 12:00 - 1:30 pm at Gensler Associates